What is claimed is:

Sub a1

1. A method for quantization of a histogram bin value of an image, characterized in that: the range of the histogram bin value is non-uniformly quantized according to the frequency of occurrence.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the range varies according to predetermined thresholds of the r histogram bin value.

3. The method according to claim 1, wherein the value having a histogram bin value of '0' is mapped into a single quantum, equivalent to a code value.

4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the values having a histogram bin value between '0.0' and a very close number of '0.0' is mapped into a single quantum, equivalent to a code value.

5. The method according to claim 2, wherein the values having a histogram bin value of more than the largest predetermined threshold are mapped into a single quantum, equivalent to a code value.

6. The method according to claim 5, wherein, when the range of the respective bin value of the histogram is normalized as the range of values from 0 to 1, the largest predetermined threshold is a value ranging from 0.1 to 1.

7. The method according to claim 1 ~~to 6~~, wherein the histogram is a color histogram.

8. The method according to claim 7, wherein the histogram is a color structure histogram.

9. The method according to claim 2, wherein the range having a bin value of greater than '0' and less than the largest threshold is uniformly quantized into a plurality of sections.

10. The method according to claim 2, wherein the range having a bin value of greater than '0' and less than the largest threshold is non-uniformly quantized.

11. The method according to claim 10, wherein sub-ranges divided by the remaining thresholds are uniformly quantized into a plurality of sections.

12. The method according to claim 10, wherein the range having a bin value of greater than '0' and less than the largest threshold is from 0.0001 to 0.0999.